UNITED NATIONS

Convention to Combat Desertification

Distr.
GENERAL

ICCD/CRIC(1)/7
4 June 2002

Original: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION
First session
18-29 November 2002
Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION, PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 22, PARAGRAPH 2(A) AND (B), AND ARTICLE 26 OF THE CONVENTION

REVIEW OF INFORMATION PROVIDED BY RELEVANT ORGANS, FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM, AS WELL AS OTHER INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, ON THEIR ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION PROGRAMMES UNDER THE CONVENTION

Note by the secretariat

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GE.02-61803

Introduction

1. By decision 11/COP.1 on procedures for the communication of information and review of implementation, the Conference of the Parties (COP), *inter alia*:

(a) Encouraged relevant organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to provide information, as appropriate, on their activities in support of the preparation and implementation of action programmes under the Convention.

(b) Requested the secretariat to compile the information provided by organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, as well as other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, on measures taken or planned in support of implementation of the Convention.

2. By decision 1/COP.5, the Conference of the Parties established the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC) to assist the COP in regularly reviewing the implementation of the Convention in the light of the experience gained at the national, subregional, regional and international levels, and to facilitate the exchange of information on measures adopted by the Parties pursuant to article 26 of the Convention.

3. The terms of reference of the CRIC state that the review process shall examine, *inter alia*, reports submitted by the Parties, information and advice from the Global Mechanism and the Committee on Science and Technology, as well as reports by relevant organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and such other reports as the Conference of the Parties may call for.

SYNTHESIS OF INFORMATION CONTAINED IN REPORTS

4. Pursuant to decisions 11/COP.1 and 1/COP.5, the secretariat sent reminders to organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, and to accredited intergovernmental organizations, inviting them to submit their reports. Based on established practice, the secretariat requested non-governmental organizations to submit their contributions directly to their national focal points so as to ensure that the report would encompass civil society inputs in keeping with the "bottom-up" approach. Accordingly, most non-governmental organizations channelled their reports through their national focal points directly into their respective national reports. The following summaries have been prepared by the secretariat based on contributions received up to the time this report was finalized.

5. This report was prepared with inputs received from organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, and from accredited intergovernmental organizations as of 24 May 2002. The secretariat endeavoured to take into consideration all the reports submitted under this agenda item. In doing so, the secretariat tried to accommodate, whenever possible, reports received after the established deadline of 30 April 2002. However, owing to serious time constraints relating to tight United Nations

editing and printing schedules, reports received after 24 May could not be considered for the purposes of this document. These reports will be posted on the secretariat web site and can be retrieved at http://www.unccd.int.

A. Organs, funds and programmes of the United Nations system

Department of Public Information (DPI)

6. During the reporting period, the United Nations Radio covered the subject of desertification in its daily broadcasts and current affairs magazines for regional and worldwide dissemination. It provided extensive coverage, in various languages, of the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and of the World Day to Combat Desertification (17 June). It also produced eight radio magazines and programmes for future transmission on desertification and the UNCCD. The Video Section produced the *World Chronicle* programmes, and a total of 50 press releases and five press briefings were issued on desertification. The United Nations information centres, information services and offices also promoted UNCCD and its core topics through press briefings, TV interviews and conferences in Islamabad, Teheran and Ouagadougou. The United Nations Information Centre in Bonn translated into German several press releases and backgrounders relating to the work of the Convention's bodies.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

7. FAO's normative activities to combat desertification have focused on support to the UNCCD through the FAO interdepartmental working group. This *ad hoc* working group comprises representatives of 15 technical services with activities that are directly linked to the sustainable development of drylands. It has promoted the compilation of data and information provided by all FAO's services and, in turn, disseminated information on matters of relevance to the Convention and to desertification in general. It has also organized FAO representation at UNCCD meetings and organized partnerships with other UNCCD bodies and international institutions. FAO has set up a web site on desertification at http://www.fao.org/desertification/.

8. FAO has provided technical assistance to the thematic networks launched by the UNCCD secretariat in Africa and Asia. In Africa, FAO participated in the meeting to launch the Thematic Programme Network on Agroforestry and Soil Conservation (Lomé, Togo, June 2001); and in Asia, in the launching meetings of the Networks on Desertification Monitoring and Assessment, Agroforestry and Soil Conservation, and Rangeland Management and Sand Dune Fixation (Iran, May 2001).

9. In 2001, FAO established a web site on water harvesting training and is developing a programme aimed at promoting water harvesting in some sub-Saharan African countries.

10. In March and May 2001, FAO, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) and other partners, organized two electronic

conferences on "Land and Agriculture" in order to catalyze stakeholders' involvement in the preparation of the World Food Summit and the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

11. FAO provided assistance to governments in formulating action programmes, policies and plans. In 2001, some 100 ongoing FAO field projects were directly related to the assessment and control of desertification. They covered a very wide range of activities, such as erosion control, improvement of water, forest and pasture management, local rural development through extension and participative approach programmes, assistance for the implementation of national information systems and statistics, and formulation of investment projects. FAO participated in the elaboration of national action programmes (NAPs) and subregional action programmes (SRAPs) in eight countries (China, Cuba, Haiti, Iran, Lebanon, Mali, Senegal and Yemen).

12. The FAO Investment Centre has formulated numerous investment projects for international and regional banks, with desertification control elements.

13. In the Near East and North Africa, FAO has implemented 100 projects and programmes, including regional projects, in more than 13 countries, relating to land and water management, sand dune stabilization, and integrated management of natural resources. The FAO Regional Office for the Near East organized five regional meetings relevant to desertification control in 2001 (Syrian Arab Republic, Egypt). In addition, FAO, in collaboration with the Emergency Centre for Locust Control Operation, created two bodies to control desert locusts and maintain vegetation in the region.

14. In sub-Saharan Africa, FAO has assisted almost all the countries with drylands or affected by desertification in controlling and reversing the degradation of soils or vegetation. FAO is involved in activities specifically related to combating desertification in Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, Sudan, Tunisia and Uganda. These activities vary from direct support to a NAP, to the implementation of forest and rural programmes in dryland areas particularly affected by desertification.

15. FAO has developed a regional initiative for southern Africa based on an integrated approach to drought management.

16. FAO is implementing a regional programme initiated by the Government of Italy for the "Institutional Strengthening of Farmers' Association Networks in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal, in the Framework of Desertification Control and Poverty Alleviation".

17. In Senegal and Ethiopia, FAO has developed special food security programmes. In many other African countries, National Forest Programmes prepared by FAO are being revised to take better account of, and fit in with, the existing Plan of Action to Combat Desertification.

18. The regional project "Sustainable Forest Management in African ACP countries" of FAO and the European Commission is contributing to improving data collection and forest information base management, mostly in the fields of wood energy and non-wood forest products, and supporting the country and subregional outlook analysis being carried out under the Forestry Outlook Study for Africa.

19. In East Africa, the project on land cover mapping based on satellite remote sensing aims to strengthen the capabilities of 12 East African countries in the sound planning and sustainable management of natural resources.

20. In Asia, 11 FAO projects in six countries were identified as being directly relevant to the UNCCD's objectives.

21. In collaboration with the India Institute of Forest Management, FAO organized a workshop in 2001 to discuss national-level criteria and indicators for sustainable management of dry forests in Asia. The workshop was attended by participants from nine countries with dry forests: Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The meeting agreed on a set of eight national-level criteria and 49 indicators for the sustainable management of dry forests in Asia.

22. In Iran, FAO prepared the National Report of the Interagency Mission on Desertification and took part in the regional workshop on capacity building for implementation of the UNCCD and in the International Workshop on New Technology to Combat Desertification in collaboration with the United Nations University.

23. FAO participated in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project to identify the root causes of desertification in China and provide a background analysis of desertification as an input to the formulation of the national action plan.

24. In the South Pacific island countries, a project was prepared to assess the magnitude of land degradation and its effects on people and food security, and an inventory of land resource information systems was compiled.

25. In Latin America, FAO participated in regional meetings organized by the secretariat of the UNCCD.

26. The Forestry Group of the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean has been also cooperating with a regional study conducted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America to establish economic and social indicators for desertification.

27. The FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean and UNEP have carried out a programme to implement desertification control activities in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Under this programme, national action programmes to combat desertification have been formulated in the six countries of the region with the largest arid and semi-arid zones and dry sub-humid areas.

28. FAO conducted a survey and made a compilation of UNCCD-related institutions and networks in all Latin American countries. A database was prepared of over 180 agencies and 600 people working in arid zone management, and another on appropriate technologies for the control of desertification. Regional training courses on desertification and sustainable development have been organized in Argentina, Chile and Mexico with the support of FAO and contributions from organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), UNDP and UNEP.

29. In 2001, there were 29 ongoing FAO field projects dealing with sustainable rural development in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid zones, preventing or rehabilitating land degradation.

30. As a general recommendation for future support to the UNCCD, FAO emphasizes the need for better rationalization of Convention activities at international, regional and national level through more dialogue and real partnership among key actors concerned with UNCCD-related activities.

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

31. IFAD's mandate as an international development and financial institution is to contribute to rural poverty alleviation in borrowing countries. It does so by providing loans and grants to help finance projects and programmes in the fields of agricultural and rural development, and natural resource management. Combating deforestation, soil degradation and desertification is central to this mandate.

32. In Latin America and the Caribbean, IFAD provides support through its project lending and Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) programmes: (a) to promote and consolidate beneficiary participation approaches, partnership development and local capacity building; (b) to mobilize resources with bilateral and multilateral organizations and the private sector; and (c) to evaluate progress and learning from experience while facilitating the dissemination and exchange of information. The report focuses on: (a) the ongoing project investment programme in arid/semi-arid zones; (b) the knowledge management and thematic networking activities undertaken under the regional TAG programme; and (c) the facilitating of support granted by the Fund in the formulation of regional and national action programmes, and related enabling and strategic activities. IFAD's current loan/project portfolio in the region comprises 51 loans/projects distributed throughout 24 countries and four geographic/economic subregions. The share of IFAD resources allocated to projects being implemented in arid and semi-arid zones amounts to US$ 287.5 million or 45 per cent of total committed lending. There are various ongoing projects in the portfolio of the Latin American and Caribbean countries that aim explicitly at combating desertification (for example in Brazil, Haiti, Mexico and Venezuela).

33. IFAD's regional TAG programme comprises 13 programmes, financed by the same number of grants for a total of US$ 10.7 million, at a total cost of US$ 26.6 million. Thematically, the TAG programme involves partnerships in various areas, including, for example, training, technical assistance and

institutional strengthening for rural development, rural credit and micro-enterprise development, and internet-based thematic networking (the FIDAMERICA Network for Information Exchange). In Cuba and Haiti, IFAD has provided support for formulating national action programmes.

34. In Asia, IFAD has supported activities relating to national, subregional and regional action programmes (RAPs), in particular to establishing and developing thematic programme networks 1, 2 and 3. IFAD has also supported projects, for example in China, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, aiming, *inter alia*, at promoting self-help groups which employ locally sustainable technologies linking them to markets and bringing food security and food resilience to communities.

35. IFAD's loans for drylands investment projects are complemented by (a) IFAD grants, comprising TAGs for agricultural research to institutions of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), for instance the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT); (b) TAGs to non-CGIAR institutions; and (c) Extended Cooperation Programme (ECP) grants to NGOs. Other IFAD activities in support of the UNCCD include the Special Programme for Asian Upland Countries, launched in mid-1998 to improve the quality of economic growth for illiterate, ethnic and tribal people in poor health, residing in semi-arid, marginal, upland areas of Asia.

36. In 2001, IFAD signed a memorandum of understanding with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in order to facilitate identification and development of projects that address land degradation.

37. IFAD-supported activities in the Near East and North Africa relevant to UNCCD implementation include contributions to the elaboration by governments of national action programmes, both nationally and locally. IFAD is financing activities with a major natural resources conservation dimension in Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. Support has been extended to NGOs in the area. Most of the IFAD-financed TAGs in the Near East and North Africa are implemented in collaboration with research centres for research into arid and semi-arid lands, e.g. ICARDA, the Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD).

38. As of December 2001, IFAD had invested US$ 980 million in 83 projects and mobilized US$ 1,260 million in co-financing for these projects.

International Labour Organization (ILO)

39. The ILO's recent programme of support to cooperatives receiving aid from the World Food Programme in the Sahel subregion, known as ACOPAM, included various projects that addressed desertification. The ILO's extensive activities on employment, income generation and social protection might offer a useful framework for implementing UNCCD's mandate regarding the promotion and protection of sustainable livelihoods.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

40. The UNCTAD Secretariat was mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to prepare the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (UNLDC III), in 2001. This mandate included an assessment of the results of the Programme of Action for the Least Development Countries (LDCs) for the 1990s, including desertification-related topics. Within the UNLDC III participatory process, the UNCTAD Secretariat participated in the meetings of the special segment of the second, third and fourth sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD. Thus, UNCTAD took desertification-related topics into consideration in its analytical work, for example its Least Developed Countries Reports. Desertification was one of the elements of the "vulnerability profiles" prepared by the UNCTAD Secretariat for borderline countries for graduation from the list of LDCs. One of the elements of these profiles is vulnerability to natural disaster, which includes desertification. Many of the Least Developed Countries Reports prepared by the UNCTAD Secretariat in the 1990s, address the problems of combating desertification. These activities helped UNLDC III to assess the results of the Programme of Action for the LDCs in the 1990s in the area of protecting the environment against drought and desertification, and to formulate Commitment 6 of the Programme of Action for the LDCs for the Decade 2001-2010, on reducing vulnerability and protecting the environment.

41. The UNCTAD Secretariat also undertakes activities to promote organic agriculture, which would seem to bear on UNCCD's objectives and programmes.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

42. UNDP has taken several measures in support of UNCCD implementation. In terms of policy measures, UNDP has assisted 19 countries in Africa, seven in Asia and five in Latin America and the Caribbean to adopt or complete their national action programmes. UNDP country offices (27) have allocated resources within their country programmes to support the implementation of national action programmes. The UNDP country offices have incorporated support to implementation of the Convention into the Country Cooperation Framework (in total, 12 in Africa, seven in Asia, four in the Commonwealth of Independent States and four in Latin America and the Caribbean). UNDP has launched a process of mainstreaming the linkage between the UNCCD and poverty reduction strategies. Through the new integrated programme UNDP plans to help countries integrate NAPs into national economic frameworks and to move from strategy development to effective implementation of the Convention.

43. During 2001, UNDP strengthened its capacity to support drylands development by establishing a new Drylands Development Centre in Nairobi. This centre is integrated into UNDP's newly created network of Sub-Regional Resource Facilities (SURF). It has helped 16 countries to develop an integrated programme for drylands development (Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen and Zimbabwe).

44. In February 2002 UNDP held a technical workshop that brought together participants from 19 affected countries, donors, subregional organizations, civil society organizations, the secretariat and the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD, United Nations agencies and regional organizations. During the workshop partners provided feedback on, and assessed the new Integrated Drylands Development Programme.

45. UNDP has provided financial assistance to help Mauritania (US$ 132,000), Cameroon (US$ 50,000), Togo (US$ 50,000) and Cape Verde (US$ 775,000) to elaborate and/or implement their NAPs.

46. Support for the preparation of the subregional action programme is provided in close cooperation with the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). Thematic programme documents were prepared in the different areas (protection of crops, early warning systems, sustainable management of transboundary plant and animal resources, rational development and management of energy resources, improvement and development of cross-border ecosystems). The Drylands Development Centre is working with CILSS, providing technical backstopping and financial support (US$ 10,000) for developing a subregional framework on local governance to guide the implementation of NAPs and the SRAP.

47. In West Africa, UNDP is helping to integrate environmental and dryland topics into national development strategies (Burkina Faso, Niger and Mauritania). This has enabled governments to fully integrate dryland issues into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). With Danish support, a training project for West Africa has been set up to facilitate access to appropriate knowledge and expertise in desertification and drought monitoring assessment.

48. In East and Southern Africa, UNDP has been supporting the NAP process by providing strategic policy advice and technical and capacity-building support, at country and subregional level, for resource mobilization to build the knowledge base and disseminate knowledge on drylands. Ten countries have now adopted or completed their NAPs with UNDP support.

49. UNDP facilitated and coordinated a partnership- and capacity-building workshop in Kampala (10-14 December 2001) to support implementation of the Convention in the subregion of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

50. In Arab States, UNDP is assisting Algeria, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, the Syria Arab Republic and Yemen to implement the Convention with funding from the Government of Finland. A fund of US$ 600,000 is being channelled into projects and programmes.

51. At the regional level, UNDP initiated support to the SRAP process in West Asia in mid-2001.

52. UNDP has supported cross-cutting programmes to establish synergies with other conventions and initiatives for mitigating the effects of drought and climate change. The UNDP/GEF-funded project will focus on the interface

between three conventions, the UNCCD, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

53. In several countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP has helped governments integrate the Convention's objectives into their programmes.

54. In addition to its core resources, UNDP operates through a range of other funds and special programmes: GEF, GEF Small Grants Programme, Capacity 21 programmes, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the Africa 2000 Initiative and the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. In supporting UNCCD implementation, UNDP is collaborating with institutions such as UNEP, FAO, the World Bank, the Global Mechanism, the GEF secretariat, and national and international non-governmental organizations.

55. The Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries has supported a number of activities which promote implementation of the Convention, including funding an operational follow-up to the second Africa-Latin America and the Caribbean meeting.

56. Greater awareness has been built on mainstreaming, particularly the linkage between the UNCCD and poverty reduction strategies. UNDP support measures have helped establish a good foundation for many of the countries to launch their NAP process.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

57. UNEP has supported implementation of the Convention by assisting countries to develop and implement projects funded by the GEF. In a global context, UNEP has implemented the identification phase of the survey and evaluation of networks, institutions, agencies and bodies relevant to implementation of the Convention. A web site database of institutions, agencies and organizations has been established containing 1,060 entries. The second phase of this survey is in planning. It concerns evaluation of UNCCD-relevant parties in southern Africa, and maintenance and further development of the database.

58. At the regional level, UNEP has helped countries and their regional and subregional organizations to develop and set up UNCCD regional coordination units in Africa, Asia and Latin America and to formulate subregional action programmes.

59. At the national level, UNEP has supported implementation of the Convention in countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

60. Since 2000, UNEP has been developing an internet-accessible database on success stories and best practices for dissemination and knowledge sharing.

61. UNEP has launched a Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands (LADA) project, in close collaboration with FAO and the UNCCD secretariat, to

provide a policy tool for the implementation of national action programmes and subregional action programmes under the Convention.

62. UNEP also facilitates closer links between land degradation and climate change. In 2001 it convened an international workshop on "Policy Related to Land and Climate Change" to evaluate existing science and policy strategies addressing the land-climate linkage.

63. In Africa, within the framework of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment, UNEP has assisted African country Parties in preparing their reports to the UNCCD. UNEP has also assisted the UNCCD process by promoting awareness of approaches to mobilizing financial resources for the implementation of the Convention in the IGAD and Southern African Development Community (SADC) subregions of Africa.

64. Within the framework of the GEF, UNEP together with UNDP and the World Bank, are partners in a special Africa Land and Water Initiative. This initiative will address the global environmental problems associated with land degradation and the management of transboundary waters in Africa, in order to promote sustainable development and food security on the continent.

65. UNEP is supporting projects in transboundary semi-arid and arid ecosystems in West, East and southern Africa and the Horn of Africa that promote regional cooperation and coordination of activities across political and sectoral boundaries in spatially and temporally variable environments (Mauritania, Mozambique, North-Eastern Ethiopia and South-Western Djibouti, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

66. UNEP also undertook the Management of Shared Water Resources Programme. It includes projects which contribute to implementation of the subregional action programme in West Africa and its thematic network on sustainable management of shared water resources, and a project on management of the North-Western Sahara Aquifer (Fouta Djallon Highlands, Niger and Nigeria, Volta River Basin).

67. In the area of environmental emergencies, UNEP is collaborating with United Nations Habitat and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on developing emergency response to floods in southern Africa. The project is under preparation.

68. UNEP is involved in the development and implementation of the environmental component of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). UNEP is assisting African countries to prepare and adopt an environmental action plan based on NEPAD's Environment Initiative, which has identified combating desertification as one of eight areas of intervention.

69. UNEP is implementing a project on Biodiversity Conservation and Renewable Energy Technologies in West Africa. This project started in November 2001 and will run until late 2003. It aims at empowering communities in four main areas of the Lake Chad basin (Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria) in West Africa to participate effectively in sustainable development.

70. The UNEP Regional Office for Africa participated in the ceremony to mark World Day to Combat Desertification in Kenya; the meeting to launch UNCCD's Thematic Network for the Promotion of Rational Use of Rangelands and Development of Fodder Crops, in the context of the African regional action programme to combat desertification, held in Maseru, Lesotho; and the fifth Regional Conference in preparation for the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD, held in Maputo, Mozambique.

71. In Asia, the Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP/ROWA) has been engaged in the preparation of the West Asian subregional action programme since 1995. It has drawn up a subregional action programme to combat desertification through a consensus building process. UNEP/ROWA helped to draw up the regional programmes to combat desertification and assisted countries in the West Asia region to prepare national action plans. The assistance included: an awareness raising forum in Bahrain; consultations on programme matters with the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Syrian Arab Republic and Sultanate of Oman; a workshop in 2001 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to assist member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) in the preparation of NAPs; preparation of guidelines for developing NAPs; organization of a focal point meeting in the Arab states in 2001 in Salalah, Oman, on preparing and implementing NAPs and SRAPs; and support to Kuwait, UAE and Palestine in preparing their national reports.

72. In the Asia-Pacific region, the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP/ROAP) has been engaged in various activities: participation in the seventh meeting of Senior Officials on the North-East Asian subregional programme of environmental cooperation, which took place in Beijing from 25 to 27 July 2001; support for participation by UNCCD country Parties in the third Asia-Africa Forum on Combating Desertification, 21-25 June 2001, in Ulanbator, Mongolia; technical and financial support to preparation of the UNCCD publication entitled "Global Alarm: Dust and Sandstorms from the World's Drylands".

73. In Europe and Central Asia, national action programmes for Uzbekistan and Armenia were developed with financial and technical assistance from UNEP. UNEP supported awareness-raising activities to promote ratification of the UNCCD by the Russian Federation. In cooperation with Russian national institutions, UNEP produced some publications on desertification issues and disseminated them in CIS countries.

74. In Latin America and the Caribbean, with the support of the Government of Mexico, the UNCCD regional coordinating unit (RCU) was established under an agreement between the Regional Office for Latin America and the Carribean (UNEP/ROLAC) and the Government of Mexico.

75. UNEP is supporting a project on the harmonization of policies. This project aims to carry out a set of policy reforms at national level in order to bring policy instruments into line with the needs of rural development, and improve their impact on land degradation and land conservation. The RCU coordinated the initial project activities, including important negotiations with participating countries (Barbados, Chile, Dominican Republic, Mexico,

Nicaragua and Peru). UNEP/ROLAC attended a large number of meetings in the region on behalf of UNEP. UNEP also provided technical and financial assistance to help countries prepare their national reports on implementation of the Convention.

76. In Latin America, UNEP/GEF contributed US$ 750,000 towards the establishment of an Indicator Model for Dryland Ecosystems; and in the Caribbean, US$ 25,000 to the Conservation of Biodiversity and Prevention of Land Degradation in Small Island Ecosystems.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

77. UNESCO's activities to assist desertification-affected countries are carried out in its fields of competence, especially science and education. UNESCO promotes education at all levels and the dissemination of information on rational natural resource use based on sound scientific research, as key elements in combating desertification.

78. In the field of education, UNESCO, in close collaboration with the UNCCD secretariat, has produced an *Educational Kit on Desertification*, which was launched on the occasion of the fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD. This educational kit is targeted at primary schools in desertification-affected countries and is based on real-life situations drawing on the experience of desertification-affected country Parties worldwide. UNCCD national focal points and NGOs working to combat desertification were invited to submit case studies highlighting the causes and consequences of desertification, and successful techniques for combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought. The kit comprises a series of 12 case studies and a teacher's guide with information on the problems of desertification and drought, and on the UNCCD. A wall chart for use in classrooms, entitled "Desertification in the World", completes the kit. The kits have been produced in four languages and are currently being tested in 18 desertification-affected countries through the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network.

79. In the area of science, UNESCO promotes capacity building in countries affected by desertification. Two UNESCO university chairs on desertification have been created (in Jordan and Sudan). The establishment of additional university chairs is under consideration.

80. UNESCO, through its Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme, puts specific emphasis on *in situ* conservation of drylands and on the ecosystem approach as developed by the Convention on Biological Diversity. An international UNESCO-MAB workshop on "Desertification: Rehabilitation of Degraded Drylands and Biosphere Reserves" was organized in collaboration with ICARDA and the United Nations University (UNU), with the participation of experts from Northern Africa, Asia and Europe.

81. UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP) for the sustainable use of freshwater resources addresses the problem of water management in drylands. Traditional means of water retention and harvesting, and other forms of traditional knowledge and practices to combat desertification are

being addressed by several of UNESCO's scientific programmes, in particular the IHP, the MAB programme and the Management of Social Transformations programme (MOST). It is expected that the results will be of direct benefit to desertification and drought-affected countries.

82. Traditional knowledge and practices to combat desertification have been addressed by several UNESCO scientific programmes. UNESCO is also associated with the programme aimed at establishing the International Research Centre on Traditional Knowledge, in Matera, Italy.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

83. As many refugee camps and settlements are in arid lands, UNHCR is seeking to reduce the impact of refugee and related operations on those fragile ecosystems. Key activities being undertaken to address such impacts include the introduction of improved agricultural techniques and practices, reforestation (including agroforestry) and improved management of existing forests and woodlands, water management and harvesting practices, and the promotion of fuel-efficient stoves and improved livestock management. All the above-mentioned activities are carefully managed through an active programme of environmental awareness-raising and environmental education.

84. The environmental management programmes of the UNHCR are designed to: (a) prevent environmental degradation from taking place; (b) help identify and put in place appropriate methods and practices that promote and enable the sound use of natural resources in refugee camps and settlements; (c) and restore natural resources and ecosystems where they have been impaired. Dryland countries currently benefiting from such interventions include Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan.

85. In addition to a broad range of practical interventions that benefit refugees as well as local communities, UNHCR is aware that decisions taken at the political level are also important when it comes to environmental management, especially in dry and arid regions. For this reason, UNHCR works closely with national and local authorities to find practical and appropriate responses to environmental issues.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

86. UNIDO has developed an initiative on land degradation (desertification and deforestation) in the African sub-Saharan zone (Chad, Mali, Niger and Sudan).

87. UNIDO has set two thematic topics for implementation of the UNCCD:

- measures for the rehabilitation of degraded land and for early warning systems to mitigate the effects of drought;
- linkages and synergies with other environmental conventions and with national development strategies.

88. Informal discussions were held with the UNCCD Facilitation Committee, with IFAD and with the Officer for Africa of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) of the GEF, on the research component of the project. The World Bank's GEF Task Officers and the GEF Biodiversity/Land Degradation Officer were briefed on this project. Accordingly, UNIDO is preparing a project concept under the new forthcoming GEF land degradation focal area, for inclusion in the GEF pipeline and informal circulation to the partners in the four participating countries for their views and comments.

89. UNIDO has developed a new concept for the "Control of land degradation, the way ahead for sustainable rural development", which is intended to contribute to national and international initiatives on reversing current trends in land degradation.

90. Finally, all the activities which concern the promotion of bamboo in UNIDO's various integrated programmes (Cuba, Ghana, India) are related to the prevention of deforestation and therefore beneficial to all projects aiming at combating desertification.

World Bank

91. In addition to regular lending and non-lending operations, the World Bank's efforts to support measures aimed at UNCCD implementation have focused on harnessing and disseminating best practices in sustainable land management in South-South exchanges. In this context, the World Bank launched the *Brazil Sustainable Land Management Study Tours* in 1998 to demonstrate the role and impact of the no-tillage system approach in sustainable land management, the process of adoption by Brazilian farmers' organizations, different strategies of technology generation and its dissemination, including the social, environmental, organizational, institutional and policy aspects, with emphasis on smallholder agriculture.

92. The popularity of this programme is growing. So far, 109 participants from 16 African countries, from Bangladesh, Laos, Cambodia, international organizations, private and non-profit-oriented organizations have taken part. In addition to building capacity, these study tours aim to help participants develop national action plans and promote the no-tillage farming systems approach appropriate to local and national circumstances. In June 2000, the World Bank produced and disseminated a video in several languages presenting no-tillage farming in Brazil.

93. In 1996, the World Bank launched a *Soil Fertility Initiative* (SFI). The SFI is an instrument to strengthen collaborative action between international organizations and governments in order to give greater impetus to activities that focus on soil fertility in Africa. The goal of the SFI is to reverse soil degradation, re-capitalize soils fertility and enhance land productivity so as to alleviate rural poverty and improve natural resource management. Under the SFI, targeted soil fertility national action plans are at various stages of preparation and or piloting in 25 countries. In at least six countries (Guinea, Kenya, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal and Zambia) several components of the SFI programme are being implemented through ongoing projects supported by the World Bank and the GEF.

94. For the period 2002-2003, the World Bank has earmarked US$ 3.75 million in grant resources for the Global Mechanism, for the elaboration and implementation of national action programmes to combat desertification. The grant is intended to support the efforts of affected countries in implementing the UNCCD over a period of three years. In particular, the grant is expected to help establish a favourable environment for the participation of civil society and the private sector in combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought, and for helping mobilize additional resources to implement the UNCCD.

World Food Programme (WFP)

95. The WFP implements development and recovery activities to strengthen food security for, and the livelihoods of, poor people living on land subject to drought and desertification. The report highlights the activities undertaken in 2001 in 19 countries. It focuses on activities supported through WFP's development programmes. Similar activities are frequently supported through food-for-work, as a component of WFP's Emergency Operations and Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations.

96. In Africa (Benin, Chad, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Sudan and Tanzania) WFP has supported multi-purpose rural development activities. It has assisted food-insecure people to upgrade their natural resources and create cereal stocks. It has supported activities for soil and water conservation, and construction of rural infrastructure. In addition, the Organization has supported the "fund of food commodities" programme, which is used to develop disaster preparedness plans. It has also helped poor households to rehabilitate degraded catchments through soil and water conservation, create and/ or rehabilitate small-scale irrigation schemes and establish community forest and fuel-wood and fruit-tree plantations.

97. Food-for-work is provided in many countries for participation in agricultural production, environmental protection and training. WFP-supported activities aim to expand agro-pastoral areas through land recovery, water management and increased water availability for cropping. In other areas, WFP supports UNDP's activities for creating cereal banks. In Senegal, WFP has assisted people in creating assets, in both agriculture and forestry, to protect natural resources, mitigate the effects of erosion and increase available water supply. In Sudan, WFP has supported the construction of small dams and wells, through food-for-work. WFP has also provided technical assistance to upgrade government expertise in vulnerability and food security analysis, for use in disaster mitigation and early warning.

98. In the Middle East, Central Asia and the Mediterranean, WFP has supported the settlement of marginalized communities living in deserts and the settlement of people on newly irrigated lands (Egypt). WFP has also begun to explore the use of remote sensing techniques to assess the environmental impact of activities and to monitor crop productivity. WFP has assisted poor farmers in Jordan systematically to adopt sustainable natural resource management practices. In Syria, WFP data and information (e.g. on

land quality, land access and estimated irrigated area per capita) were collected and entered into a computer system as part of a vulnerability analysis and mapping exercise. WFP also conducted a drought risk analysis for Syria. WFP has been involved, and will play an important role, in the process of formulating a national drought strategy for Syria.

99. In Latin America and the Caribbean (Guatemala, Haiti, Nicaragua), WFP has supported the "Creation of assets to cope with natural disaster-related vulnerability" programme to help communities better cope with the effects of natural disasters. It has provided technical support and training in soil conservation and food production methods, and income-generating activities. The Organization has also assisted people in affected areas by means of activities designed to reduce their vulnerability to these crises, encouraging them to adopt soil and water conservation practices on their farms and invest in irrigation.

World Health Organization (WHO)

100. WHO addressed global environmental change issues, of which desertification was one. From a health perspective, there are many indirect consequences of desertification which are relevant to WHO's work. WHO established potential links between desertification and cardio-respiratory diseases, vector-borne diseases, water- and food-borne diseases, malnutrition, psychosocial consequences and other related morbidity and mortality.

101. WHO has joined the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, which will provide input to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the Convention to Combat Desertification.

102. Finally, WHO identified three projects as being relevant to desertification-health links. They address air pollution from wind erosion, air pollution from forest and bush burning, and forest fires. The Organization assisted national and international authorities in capacity building to implement clean air implementation plans.

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

103. The World Meteorological Organization has participated actively in implementation of the UNCCD in a number of ways. WMO supported several scientific programmes including the Agricultural Meteorological Programme, Climate Information and Prediction Services (CLIPS), the Hydrology and Water Resources Programme and the Technical Cooperation Programme.

104. WMO continues to involve national meteorological and hydrological services and regional and subregional meteorological centres in the improvement of hydrological and meteorological networks and strategies for systematic observation, exchange and analysis of data, and monitoring of droughts; in assisting in the transfer of knowledge and technology; and in strengthening and intensifying research on the interactions between climate, the hydrological regime and desertification.

105. WMO has undertaken seminars and workshops on topics relevant to desertification: eight training seminars and workshops and 30 forums have been held throughout Africa, South and Central America and the Caribbean and in Asia. These seminars aimed to come up with an integrated approach to the prevention and mitigation of environmental disasters. WMO also participated in several meetings concerned with UNCCD implementation in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

106. In addition, WMO organized or co-sponsored a number of activities in support of implementation of the UNCCD in Africa through assistance to drought-monitoring centres.

107. WMO provided financial support for the preparation of national reports by affected Parties in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe. WMO also contributed to capacity-building initiatives for the development of national action programmes and to information and awareness-raising efforts through its own publications, and by supporting the reproduction of UNCCD information documentation.

World Tourism Organization (WTO)

108. Tourism is a sector that is affected by desertification. If developed in a sustainable manner and on a significant scale, it can provide an alternative to economic activities which contribute to accelerating desertification, such as cattle raising and logging. WTO has devoted some effort to defining guidelines for the sustainable development and management of tourism in desert areas. It plans to undertake research on climate change and tourism, in which context the subject of desertification could be dealt with further.

B. Intergovernmental organizations

Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD)

109. ACSAD is a specialized organization working within the framework of the League of Arab States with the aim of harmonizing efforts to develop scientific agricultural research in arid and semi-arid areas. ACSAD helps in the exchange of information and experience and promotes modern agricultural techniques to increase agricultural production in 22 Arab countries.

110. ACSAD has undertaken activities in North African member countries of the Arab League to support implementation of the UNCCD. Together with agricultural research centres in Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, ACSAD launched a project with local communities on the use of marginal water for irrigation. ACSAD also carried out a survey on the status of vegetation cover in North Eastern Libya.

111. ACSAD has established the Arab Database for Arid Plants (ADAP) to help manage and select suitable species to rehabilitate degraded land. ACSAD conducted a study on the status of desertification and ways to combat desertification in the Arab states. A summary of each country profile will be presented during the CRIC meeting in November 2002.

112. In West Asia, ACSAD carried out various activities in Syria (rehabilitation of Syrian Steppe), Jordan (wind erosion control and sand dune fixation) and Lebanon (Balabak and Hermel project). Additionally, ACSAD contributed to implementation of the subregional action programme for West Asia. ACSAD has been assigned to implement two networks dealing with water resources management for agriculture in arid, semi- and sub-humid areas in West Asia. In this framework, ACSAD prepared an inventory study survey on the vegetation cover.

113. ACSAD participated in a workshop on capacity building for West Asia stakeholders.

African Development Bank (AfDB)

114. The Bank has been playing an active role in the implementation of the Convention, particularly in the context of its efforts to reduce poverty in Africa, promote sustainable development and regenerate the environment in the drylands. In this context, the Bank is active as a member of the Facilitation Committee set up to provide support and advice to the Global Mechanism on how to develop its operations and scope.

115. In addition, it continued to commit substantial resources to projects and programmes that address the problem of desertification. It is addressing, through bank-financed projects, some key sectors, like livestock management, protection of forests and natural habitats, and preservation of biodiversity, by mainstreaming into the project cycle such core issues as land tenure, greater participation by NGOs and women, access to credit, markets, and health and educational facilities. Furthermore, the Bank is building and reinforcing partnerships with ongoing programmes to co-manage and co-finance projects aimed at combating desertification.

116. The Bank houses UNCCD's RCU for Africa. The RCU and the African Development Bank plan jointly to undertake activities that reflect their comparative advantages: integrated management of water resources of transboundary rivers, agro-forestry and soil conservation, and other planned thematic programme networks.

African Organization of Cartography and Remote Sensing (AOCRS)

117. AOCRS is the institutional focal point of the network on ecological monitoring, remote sensing, natural resources mapping and early warning systems for Africa. AOCRS launched a web site and drew up two reports relating to the network. The reports laid down guidelines for the fourth thematic programme network (TPN4), and identified concrete methods for its implementation.

118. AOCRS participated in the technical meeting on the establishment and implementation of a system of information exchange and dissemination relating to the African regional action programme. During this meeting, AOCRS made a presentation on the structure of the network and the design of its web site.

Centre for Environment and Development for the Arab Region and Europe (CEDARE)

119. In support of UNCCD implementation, CEDARE organized regional workshops and training courses: the International Meeting on Man and the Environment (Oman, September 2001) and the Regional Meeting on the Status of Desertification in the Arab Region (Oman, 3-5 September 2001).

120. CEDARE took over the follow-up on the programme for application of SOTER (Soil and Terrain Database) in three Arab countries: Egypt, Lebanon and Syrian Arab Republic. The organization also conducted the study and preparation for the final report on the state of the environment in Arab countries. This report presents a regional perspective on the environment, developmental activities and environmental policies.

121. CEDARE organized regional coordination for establishing a regional system of exchange of information on desertification in the Arab region.

European Community (EC)

122. During the reporting period, January 2000 - December 2001, the European Community has consistently promoted actions to address desertification at the local, national, regional and international levels.

123. The report describes the main policy frameworks, corresponding to different geographical regions, governing the activities of the Community in developing countries. These include actions supported under the European Development Fund (EDF) in the Group of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (ACP), the Mediterranean Partnership, the funds for Asia and Latin America, those for Eastern European and Central Asian countries and thematic budget lines such as the one on the environment and tropical forests in developing countries.

124. The Community funded projects relevant to land degradation and desertification in all regions in which it is active, including the promotion of forestry measures to prevent dune encroachment on desert margins, the development of smallholder agricultural production through support for irrigation and land reclamation, integrated rural livelihood and environmental development programmes, water resource management, decentralized cooperation for rural development and a range of measures to promote food security.

125. In ACP countries, environmental work has been very intensive in the fields of conservation and wildlife, forestry and sustainable management of natural resources, with the implementation of seven new programmes and projects for a global amount of € 55.1 million, and with the approval of four new programmes totalling € 26 million. Furthermore, the EC has supported regional institutions such as the CILSS, the IGAD and the SADC in the context of UNCCD implementation.

126. In Mediterranean countries, the EC approved two projects in the category "combating desertification" with a contribution of € 4.5 million. In addition, the European Union's main financial instrument supporting its environmental policy (LIFE) financed two projects relating to desertification in the Mediterranean region with a Community contribution of € 0.6 million.

127. In Asia, the Community provided support to the environment sector with substantial programmes of forest protection (Indonesia and Philippines), biodiversity and environmental technology.

128. In Central and Eastern Europe, the Special Accession Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (SAPARD), with an annual envelope of € 0.52 billion, should be cited as being of relevance to the UNCCD.

129. In addition, the EC provided support under the various research programmes within the Community's Fifth Framework Research Programme to various activities beneficial to implementation of the Convention.

130. The Community has contributed to the CRIC process by tackling some fundamental cross-cutting themes identified by the last Conference of the Parties as being crucial to improve implementation of the Convention. These concern subjects such as the participatory process, involvement of civil society, land tenure and synergies among multilateral environmental agreements.

Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)

131. The IADB has been disseminating the mandates and principles of the UNCCD and providing technical support to the countries of the region in support of preparation of the national action programmes and organization of the different regional meetings. The IADB has also provided financial and technical support to member States for implementation of projects aiming at improving land management and the income and life quality of affected populations.

132. Since 1996, the IADB has participated in the regional meetings of the Latin America and Carribean region, providing technical assistance to prepare documents relevant to the region. In this regard, financial support was provided to the fourth regional meeting, while both technical and financial support were made available for the organization of the fifth regional meeting and to prepare documents on the integrated management of local governments, and on agroforestry. For the sixth regional meeting, assistance was provided for the preparation of a scientific and technical report on land degradation in the region, especially Central America.

133. As part of implementation of the Convention in the region, the IADB provided financial and technical assistance to the development of a number of activities and projects. This assistance was used, *inter alia*, for preparing the Latin American workshop on desertification (1994, Fortaleza, Brazil), organizing an international course on desertification and development in Latin America and the Caribbean (1997, La Serena, Chile) and for preparing national action programmes to combat desertification in Central

America. Technical assistance was also extended to experts and technicians working in national focal point institute in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador and Peru, with the aim of establishing methodologies for preparing NAPs and disseminating the principles and mandates of the UNCCD.

134. The IADB is preparing a regional technical cooperation programme, for US$ 1,090,000 which at the request of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Peru, will be allocated to combat desertification in South America. The aim of this cooperation will be institution building, and capacity building for the different actors and decision-makers.

135. The IADB considers that governments must have the political will to provide internal and external financial resources to implement policies and activities aiming at the sustainable development of arid lands. Revision and harmonization of national and sectoral policies and strengthening of the national focal points are also necessary. Furthermore, governments should promote the creation of an enabling framework by means of priority strategies that give due attention to the causal factors of land degradation and promote participation at all levels. The IADB also believes that technical and financial assistance should be used at the local level to develop effective and simple early warning systems to prevent and mitigate the effects of desertification and drought. Furthermore, better resource management by the different actors is vital to reducing poverty and promoting social equity in arid lands.

136. At the regional level, the IADB considers it important to develop regional activities aimed at the exchange of knowledge and experience of successful policies. Efforts at the regional level should take advantage of the technical and financial support made available by the IADB and the Interagency Group for Rural Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL), IFAD, FAO, German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)).

International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA)

137. ICARDA has attended sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD and meetings of the Facilitation Committee of the Global Mechanism. It also participated in the joint CBD-UNCCD work programme on Biological Diversity of Drylands. Several meetings were held with country representatives to discuss ICARDA's contribution to both the preparations for and implementation of the NAPs. Other meetings were held following on action taken by ICARDA towards implementation of the SRAPs for West Asia and North Africa. ICARDA has contributed to the debate on preparation of NAPs in West Asian and North African country Parties.

138. ICARDA has developed a conceptual framework for achieving complementarity between the regional and subregional networks on water management, and a proposal for initial activities in the thematic network on water management (TN1) of the West Asian SRAP and the Asian RAP.

139. In West Asia, ICARDA and ACSAD have started to implement TN1. Two major activities are under way, the Inventory Studies on Water Resources in West Asia (TN2) and the Pilot Areas Project. A document presenting a framework for the selection of representative pilot project sites in the various countries involved in the West Asian SRAP has been finalized.

140. ICARDA has proposed a framework for the TN1 network on water resources for the West Asia SRAP. A database has been developed at ICARDA. Data will be entered, managed, analysed and made accessible to partners.

141. ICARDA participated in the Asia thematic programme network on rangeland and sand dune fixation (TPN3), held in Iran, from 7 to 9 May 2001.

142. An agreement was signed between ICARDA and UNEP/ROWA in August 2001 on implementation of an inventory and regional database on sustainable water management in West Asia, as part of the West Asian SRAP.

143. ICARDA is a member of the Steering Committee of the thematic programme network for water management in Asia (TPN4), led by Syrian Arab Republic, and is assisting the Syrian Arab Republic with the launch of the TPN4 in Asia. ICARDA participated in the meeting to launch a regional thematic programme network (TPN3) on the promotion of the rational use of rangelands and development of fodder crops, in the context of the RAP in Africa.

144. In West Asia and North Africa, ICARDA participated in two UNCCD events in Mongolia (the third Asia-Africa Forum on Combating Desertification and the fourth regional meeting of UNCCD focal points). ICARDA participated in the Arab Region Meeting for the Preparation and Implementation of National and Subregional Action Programmes to Combat Desertification in West Asia and North Africa.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

145. The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD is currently working to formulate policy guidance on how to mainstream global environmental issues, notably desertification, in development cooperation. The DAC, in collaboration with the OECD Environment Directorate, is identifying linkages between climate change and central socioeconomic priorities such as combating land degradation and desertification. The DAC is also working to improve statistical reporting of aid to the UNCCD.

The Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS)

146. In accordance with its institutional mandate, the OSS has supported countries of the African region in the monitoring of desertification, the evaluation of action programmes to combat desertification and the reinforcement of mechanisms to disseminate information on desertification and sustainable management of natural resources.

147. In 2001, the OSS helped to strengthen national capacities for monitoring desertification, under its Long Term Ecological Monitoring Observatories Network (ROSELT/OSS) and Satellite Images for Meteorology, Agrometeorology and Environment Management in the Saharan-Sahelian Zone (IMAGES) programmes. Also under the ROSELT programme, it assisted 12 pilot observatories to harmonize the measurement protocols and mechanisms used to disseminate the information obtained. In 2001, the programme established a scientific and technical committee, and framework agreements were signed with several observatories in the region.

148. In the scientific and technical field, the OSS has carried out the following activities:

- Setting up of a web site for the ROSELT programme;
- Preparing a database on the observatories;
- Verifying and editing the information obtained by the El Ommayyed Observatory (Egypt);
- Organizing two workshops on methodology to monitor vegetation.

149. The IMAGES programme plans to use satellite imagery for meteorology, agro-meteorology and environment management in the Saharan-Sahelian zone. Under this programme, the OSS, in collaboration with Morocco and Tunisia and under the sponsorship of the EC, is planning a technical assistance project to develop operational applications. The objective of this project is to assist in decision-making on critical issues such as food security, management of natural resources and environmental monitoring.

150. The OSS has promoted cooperation among its member States in the sustainable management of common natural resources, in particular within the NWSAS (North-Western Sahara Aquifer System) programme which involved Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. The OSS also promoted the System for the Circulation of Information on Desertification/Environmental Information and Monitoring System on the Internet (SID/SISEI) programme.

151. In accordance with decision 11/COP.4, the OSS, in collaboration with CILSS presented to the Committee on Science and Technology a technical report on field experience of monitoring and evaluation of the NAPs of African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean countries.

152. In accordance with decision 11/COP.5, the OSS drew up a programme for training trainers, which was offered to focal points and teams in charge of the follow-up and evaluation of the action programmes.

West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA)

153. The Commission of the West African Economic and Monetary Union has participated actively in implementation of the Convention through its own activities, within the framework of the SRAP in West Africa and in Chad. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) drew up an action programme with eight components (combating desertification, conservation of biodiversity, combating coastal erosion, management of pollution, and improvement of living conditions, management of transboundary ecosystems,

management of hydric resources, promotion of renewable energies, capacity building). The Commission participated, in collaboration with ECOWAS, CILSS and the secretariat of the UNCCD, in the development of the subregional action programme. It supported land management in the framework of special funds earmarked for affected areas.

154. For 2002, the Commission plans to finance national workshops and meetings of experts and ministers responsible for the environment. The Commission collaborated with the CILSS and the UNCCD secretariat in the preparation of transboundary projects to combat desertification in ECOWAS countries: the Beli project (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger), the Kantchari project (Niger, Burkina Faso) and the Azawak project (Mali, Niger).

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